Remarks

Claims 1-5 are pending.

Claims 1-5 stand rejected

Claims 1-4 have been amended.

No new matter has been added.

In the Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 1-5 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 for

containing some minor indefiniteness rejections. Applicant has amended the claims accordingly

and respectfully requests that this rejection be removed.

Turning to the prior art, the Examiner has rejected claims 1-5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as

being unpatentable over Meunier (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0186144) in view of Keech

(U.S. Patent No. 2002/0029342). Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner and

submits the following remarks in response.

The present invention as claimed in independent claim 1 is directed to a method of

managing chargeable parking of vehicles, of the type using a plurality of vehicle immobilizing

devices to immobilize defaulting vehicles, where a release code is delivered to the user after

payment of the corresponding fine.

The method includes the steps of providing at least one parking terminal equipped with

payment means, and providing a server having a database connected to the parking terminal and

containing a list of pairs of data items each formed of an identifier assigned to an externally

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applied immobilizing device and an associated release code.

In the event of a release request from a user, the identifier of said immobilizing device, entered by said user, is received at the parking terminal which sets up a session for payment of the amount corresponding to releasing the vehicle immobilizing device by means of the payment means. The identifier of said immobilizing device entered at said parking terminal is communicated to the server after validation of the payment session. The server, receiving the identifier entered at the parking terminal, in response delivers the associated release code to the terminal which is supplied to the user, allowing them to release the externally applied immobilizing device. Independent claim 2 is a apparatus claim for implementing such a method of managing a pay parking installation.

As noted in paragraphs [0007] and [0008] of the present invention [0007], in the field of externally applied immobilizing devices, in practice, the release code is supplied to the user by telephone in response to supplying a bank card number for the account from which the amount of the fine is debited. Such a prior art arrangement is not satisfactory in terms of secure payment, in particular because a voice call giving the bank card number to a server may be fraudulently intercepted.

The advantage of the present invention, as noted in paragraph [0018] automates the releasing of immobilizing devices with no voice call to a server, so that payment is secure. The entire release procedure, from the standpoint of the user is conducted at the parking location.

In forming the rejection of independent claims 1 and 2, the Examiner cited primarily to the Meunier reference asserting that this reference teaches all of the elements of the claim except

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the server, receiving the identifier entered and in response delivering the associated release code

to the terminal. The Examiner however, asserts that Keech teaches such an element and that it is

obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine Keech with Meunier to arrive at the present

invention as claimed. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

The Meunier reference is directed to a system and method for managing a car rental

service where the cars are not stored in a central or protected location. The intention is to set up

a car rental service that employs less infrastructure and employees than a typical car rental

agency. This is achieved, according to Meunier by an OBU (On-Board Unit), located within

each vehicle, that communicates all of the relevant information to a central reservations,

management and location system.

This OBU, at least initially, controls access to the vehicle prior to the user entering it and

completing their registration. For example, paragraph [0175] cited by the Examiner reads -

> "After assimilating said instructions, said new users would then be
> requested to go through a minimal security procedure before being granted access
> to the vehicle. This procedure could involve the user entering one verifiable
> personal information from outside the vehicle such as a driver's license number, a
> special code obtained in advance or a credit card number. After performing
> satisfactory verifications, the OBU unlocks the door. Using the vehicle
> communication means such as the display and keyboard, the new user is then able
> to continue the registration session, if required, in the comfort and relative privacy
> of the vehicle, directly entering the additional information required until the
> registration process is complete."

An exemplary implementation of the process is set forth in the subsequent paragraph

[0177] which reads -

> "In a preferred embodiment, the invention provides for new users to
> register with a vehicle rental service provider by simply *dialing a special CRMLS*

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> *number advertised on a vehicle from their personal communication device or*
> *from a public phone.* Said new users would then be prompted to precisely identify
> the vehicle they are looking to rent by entering the selected vehicle's assigned
> number. Said new users would then be requested to go through a minimal security
> procedure such as entering one verifiable information over the phone and
> continuing the registration session in a manner much similar to the one described
> in section 6.3.2. Upon successful completion, the CRMLS would then instruct the
> OBU to unlock the doors."

Such an arrangement is not related to the present invention as claimed. Firstly, the

immobilizing device of the present invention relates to an externally applied restraing that is put

on a car when their parking time has expired. A fine needs to be paid for going past their allotted

time so that they can receive a release code to enter on the immobilizing device on the outside of

their car before they can drive away. On the other hand, the closest thing to an immobilizing

device in Meunier is the normal key lock for entering the car door.

Moreover, even if the Examiner contends that such a normal key from Meunier is similar

to the externally applied immobilizing device of the present invention, the manner for releasing

this element in Meunier is exactly the manner that the present invention intends to overcome.

Although Meunier discloses a minimal security procedure before being granted access to the

vehicle, it is disclosed in paragraph [0177] that this process entails *dialing a special CRMLS*

number and identifying over the phone the vehicle they are looking to rent and then *entering one*

verifiable information over the phone. In fact, the entire purpose of Meunier is to remove the

necessity of a personal or terminals outside of the vehicle to be rented.

The Examiner has also cited to the Keech reference regarding the use of entering a

security key to receiving an electronic unlocking code. The Keech reference is directed to a

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specific improvement to secured remote computer transactions that entails improvements to the

codes and keys to make third party theft more difficult as explained in paragraphs [0010] and

[0011]. Applicant notes that that the release codes referred to in claims 1 and 2 are not

necessarily encrypted are not the encrypted, they are just released after payment is verified. It is

likely that when implementing the system of the present claims that debit card information

entered at the parking terminal would be encrypted during the payment procedure but that is not

part of the claim. Applicant further notes that there are no disclosures in Keech which relate to a

parking terminal operation.

As such, the cited prior art, either alone or in combination with one another, does not

teach or suggest the present invention as claimed. For example, there is no teaching or

suggestion in either one of Meunier or Keech that discloses providing a server having a database

connected to the parking terminal and containing a list of pairs of data items each formed of an

identifier assigned to *an externally applied immobilizing device* and an associated release code.

Likewise, there is not teaching or suggestion in Meunier or Keech that discloses *at the*

parking terminal, setting up a session for payment of the amount corresponding to releasing the

vehicle immobilizing, *and communicating the identifier of the immobilizing device entered at the*

parking terminal to the server and thereafter receiving the identifier entered *at the parking*

terminal for supplying to the user, allowing them to release said *externally applied immobilizing*

device.

For at least these reasons, Applicant submits that the prior art does not show all of the

elements of independent claims 1 and 2 and respectfully requests that the rejection of these

claims be withdrawn. As claims 3-5 depend from claim 1, these claims should be allowed for at

least the same reasons.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that pending claims 1-5 are in

condition for allowance, the earliest possible notice of which is earnestly solicited. If the

Examiner feels that an interview would facilitate the prosecution of this Application they are

invited to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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